

[REDACTED]

EL SALVADOR: Crackdown on Death Squads

Government efforts to discourage death squad activity evidently are having some effect. Police arrested an Army officer implicated in the murder of US labor officials in 1981, and they reportedly have warned civilians associated with death squads to leave the country or face arrest. [REDACTED] the number of deaths attributed to the squads has decreased substantially over the past three weeks. He claimed only three such deaths were recorded last week. [REDACTED]

Comment: The reduction in activities of the death squads may be only temporary. The recent ratification of the new constitution with its controversial land reform articles may have removed the motive for some of the intimidation by the death squads. Once the election campaign begins in earnest, however, there is likely to be a resurgence of both leftist and rightist violence. [REDACTED]

Approved for Release

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